

Darius and the Bisotun Inscription: A New Interpretation of the Last Paragraph of Column IV

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Abstract

The last paragraph (lines 88-92) of Col. IV of the Old Persian version of the Bisotun inscription is one of the most difficult passages in this great inscription. In it, Darius points to the addition of an 'Aryan' (i.e. Old Persian) version to the two previous (i.e. the Elamite and Babylonian) versions of the inscription. There is no firm basis for the prevailing opinion that 'Aryan' refers to the Old Persian cuneiform script, and thus concluding that this script did not exist before the Bisotun inscription. Darius also announces that the text of the inscription was copied on clay tablets and on parchment and circulated throughout his empire, adding that two items were added to the copies of the inscription. Darius's tomb inscriptions (DNa and DNb) reveal his emphasis on his genealogy, and on his virtues, skills and abilities. These are the two items which were added to the copies of the Bisotun inscription and circulated to all the provinces of the Achaemenid Empire. The old Persian words used to refer to 'genealogy' and 'personality' in this part of the inscription should be read as *nāmanāfa*- and *uvāda*- respectively.

Keywords

Bisotun inscription, Darius the Great, Old Persian

Following his victory over the usurper Gaumāta, the Median Magus, his accession to the throne and suppression of a series of rebellions throughout the Achaemenid Empire during his first regnal year, the Achaemenid king Darius I (r. 522-486 BCE) decided to have the details of these events inscribed on Mount Bisotun to be handed down to future generations. The trilingual (Elamite, Babylonian, Old Persian) Bisotun monument consists of a relief representing the king's victory over Gaumāta and nine other rebels. It is not only the longest inscription of the Achaemenids but also the most important document of ancient Persia. In this inscription, Darius the Great introduces himself along his ancestral line, enumerates the twenty-three provinces of his empire, and describes thoroughly the way he recovered power and defeated the pretenders and rebels.

The first version of the inscription incised in the space to the right of the relief was the initial Elamite version. Then the Babylonian version was added to the left side (Schmitt 1990, pp. 300f., 303; Chul-Hyun 2003, p. 5) and, at the same time, new pieces of information were added to the text, including the numbers of enemies killed or captured in each campaign. Moreover, the Babylonian version makes use of the Semitic names of the months instead of the Iranian names, and the Median forms of some of the toponyms. The Old Persian version of the inscription was inscribed later in the same year beneath the panel of sculptures. At the time of this addition, other alterations were made, such as the narrating of events according to the chronological order of the campaigns and, most important of all, the addition of a new paragraph (lines 88-92) to the end of Col. IV. This paragraph does not have any equivalent in the Babylonian version; however, at a later date and owing to lack of space, the Elamite translation of this paragraph was added in ten lines above the relief to the left over Darius's head and that of his bow-bearer (von Voigtlander 1978, p. 62; Schmitt 1990, p. 302). When Darius defeated the Scythians with the pointed caps (*Sakā tigraxaudā*) in his third regnal year and arrested their leader Skunkha, he ordered the figure of Skunkha to be added to the right end of the queue of subdued rebels before him. Due to the extension of this sculpture into the Elamite version of the inscription, the Elamite version was meticulously copied to the left of the Old Persian version (Schmitt 1990, p. 302). Since the original Elamite version did not include the equivalent of lines 88-92 of the fourth column of the Old Persian version, this second Elamite version, too, lacks it (Schmitt 1990, p. 302). At a later date, 36 new lines were added only to the Old Persian version to record the events of Darius's second and third regnal years. These lines form the fifth column of the Old Persian version (Schmitt 1990, p. 301).

Shorter versions of the Bisotun inscription have also been discovered: two stone fragments of the Babylonian version in Babylon; fragments of two Aramaic versions on papyrus in Egypt; a more detailed version at Elephantine; and a shorter one at Saqqara (Chul-Hyun 2003, pp. 6, 11, 18). The Aramaic fragments give the number of casualties and make use of Semitic month names and the Median forms of the toponyms, thus being close to the Babylonian version incised on the rock. However, due to the fundamental differences which exist between them, they cannot have originated from the same source (see also Greenfield and Porten 1982, pp. 13-16; Chul-Hyun 2003, pp. 6, 21).

It should be noted that inscriptions of the Achaemenid kings are sometimes monolingual (often in Old Persian), sometimes bilingual (Old Persian and Elamite or Babylonian), mostly trilingual (Old Persian, Elamite, Babylonian), and rarely quadrilingual (Old Persian, Elamite, Babylonian, Hieroglyphic

Egyptian). As these inscriptions have remained intact through later alterations, they are considered invaluable historical and linguistic treasures.

The original Old Persian text, i.e. what had been dictated by Darius in Old Persian and was first translated into Elamite and incised on the rock, was not exactly the same as the Old Persian version of the inscription which we can see today; as mentioned before, the Old Persian version was added after the Elamite and Babylonian versions. Undoubtedly a few changes had occurred in the original Old Persian text before copying it on the rock. For example, the following sentence in the Elamite version (Col. III, line 65) is a word for word rendering of an Old Persian sentence which must have been dictated by Darius. However, this sentence appears in a different form in the extant Old Persian version of the inscription (Col. IV, lines 39f.), where the subjunctive form *ahati* has substituted the original imperative form *astu*:

Elamite: *'da-a-ia-ú-iš-mi tar-ma áš-du*

Original Old Persian: **dahyāušmaj duruvā astu*

Extant Old Persian: *dahyāušmaj duruvā ahati*

Meaning: 'May my country be secure!' (see Grillot-Susini et al. 1993, p. 35; Schmitt 1991, p. 69; Chul-Hyun 2003, pp. 19-20).

The question arises of the material on which and the script in which the original Old Persian text dictated by Darius had been written, i.e. the original text taken to the top of the rock by the scribe(s) to be translated into Elamite and incised on the rock. Chul-Hyun (2003, p. 7) believes that the Old Persian sentences uttered by Darius were first written on parchment in Aramaic script and then translated into other languages. Herzfeld (1935, p. 48) had already reached the conclusion that Old Persian could also be written in Aramaic script from the time of Darius I. As shown by him, in the Babylonian versions of the inscriptions of Darius I and his son, Xerxes, on Mount Alvand in Hamadān, known as the *Ganjnāme* and referred to as DE and XE respectively, the Old Persian word *parūnām* (in the phrase *ajvam parūnām xšāyaθiyam* 'one king of many'; DE 8-10, XE 9-10) is wrongly translated into Babylonian *mahrū* 'formerly, previously.' It seems that the Babylonian translator translated an Old Persian text in Aramaic script, in which Old Persian *paru-* 'many' could also be read as *paruva-* 'former, previous.' In addition, reference can be made to an effaced Old Persian inscription in Aramaic script on the right side of the entrance to the tomb of Darius I at Naqsh-e Rostam, under the Elamite version of the inscription known as DNb, in which *hš'yty wzrk* (= Old Persian *xšāyaθiya vazrka* 'great king') and *m'hy* (= Old Persian *māhyā* 'in the month') were identified by Herzfeld. This inscription is sometimes wrongly considered

the Aramaic version of DNB (e.g. Kent 1953, p. 109), but, as has been shown, the language of the inscription is Old Persian and it must belong to the time of Artaxerxes II or III (cf. Frye 1982, p. 90; Chul-Hyun 2003, p. 22).

Another important enduring question is the time and the way Old Persian cuneiform script was invented. As we know, cuneiform script has its root in Mesopotamia. The Sumerians who developed a kind of pictographic writing at the end of the 4th millennium BCE soon came to realize that leaving straight lines on soft clay tablets with a reed stylus is much easier than drawing curved lines. As a result, Sumerian pictograms gradually changed into a combination of straight lines, each of which looked like a wedge. The Sumerian cuneiform script which was written horizontally from left to right and consisted of a large number of ideograms, logograms and syllabograms, was soon adopted for writing other languages, such as the Semitic languages of Akkadian (with Babylonian and Assyrian dialects) and Eblaite, the Indo-European languages of Palaian, Luwian and Hittite, and the isolated languages of Khat-tian and Hurrian. At a later date, the speakers of Ugaritic (a Semitic language) invented their own cuneiform script which was much simpler than the cuneiform scripts directly or indirectly derived from Sumerian. In addition, before the migrations of the Iranian-speaking Medes and Persians into the western and southern parts of the Iranian plateau, the native inhabitants of these regions (i.e. the Urartians, the Elamites, the Kassites, the Gutu and the Lullubi) used varieties of the cuneiform script.

The oldest known Sumerian texts discovered at Uruk (some 250 km to the southeast of Baghdad) belong to about 2900 BCE, when the cuneiform script consisted of about 2000 signs. The number of signs dropped gradually—to some 800 in the tablets discovered at Shuruppak (ca. 2700-2350) and to some 500 by the end of the millennium.

The Elamites were familiar with cuneiform since the end of the 3rd millennium BCE, but they only used it in writing Akkadian. It took them several centuries to begin to use a revised form of the Sumero-Akkadian cuneiform script to write their own language. The number of signs used in the Elamite script is less than 150; some altered over time. The Old Persian cuneiform script consists of thirty-six phonic signs, eight logograms, two word dividers and a few signs for numerals; it is among the simplest forms of cuneiform script (on cuneiform; see also Schmitt 1993, pp. 456-462; Walker 2004).

Diakonoff (1993, p. 114; 1970, pp. 98-124) ascribes the invention of what is now known as the Old Persian cuneiform script to the Medes and believes that they based it on the Aramaic script and the Akkadian and Urartian cuneiform scripts. Ghirshman (1954, p. 163) ascribes the invention of the Old Persian cuneiform to the time of Chishpish, son of Hakhāmanish.

Hallock (1970, pp. 52-55) suggests that the script began under Cyrus the Great and was completed under Darius I (see also Bahari 2001, pp. 209-12). Some scholars (e.g. Brandenstein and Mayrhofer 1964, p. 17) believe that this script was invented by the command of Darius I; as a result, the Old Persian inscriptions of Ariaramnes (AmH) and Arsames (AsH), respectively great-grandfather and grandfather of Darius I, on gold tablets discovered in Hamadān, and the short trilingual inscriptions assigned to Cyrus the Great at Pasargadae (CMA, CMb and CMc) must be later commemorations of those kings. The gold tablets of Ariaramnes and Arsames are sometimes attributed to the time of Artaxerxes II (Kent 1953, p. 12) or III (Schmitt 1989, p. 60).

The long-held assumption that the Old Persian cuneiform script was only used in royal inscriptions and not intended for use in everyday life (e.g. Schmitt 1993, p. 458; Walker 2004, p. 46) was disputed by the discovery of a broken Old Persian clay tablet in 2007 (Stolper and Tavernier 2007, pp. 1-28) among thousands of economic and administrative tablets already unearthed by Herzfeld in 1933 in the fortification of Persepolis.

The correct interpretation of the concluding lines (i.e. lines 88-92) of Col. IV of the Old Persian version of the Bisotun inscription will help to clarify some of the aforesaid issues. As mentioned above, the Old Persian version succeeded the Elamite and Babylonian versions, and the latter two lack the lines studied below. The effaced letters will be shown in italics. Some of the most important reconstructions, readings and translations of this part of the inscription are as follow.

I

θātiy : Dārayavauš : xšāyaθiya : vašnā : Auramazdāha : i(ya)m : dipīmai : *ty(ām)* :
 adam : akunavam : paṭišam : ariyā : āha : utā : pavastāyā : utā : carmā : graθitā :
āha : *paṭišamai* : *paṭikaram* : akunavam : *paṭišam* : *uvādām* : *akunavam* : utā :
 niyapiθiya : utā : paṭiyafrasiya : paišiyā : mām : pasāva : i(mā)m : dipim : adam :
 frāstāyam : viṣpadā : atar : dahyāva : kāra : hamātaxšatā

Saith Darius the King: By the favor of Ahuramazda this is the inscription¹ which I made. Besides, it was in Aryan, and on clay tablets and on parchment it was composed. Besides, a sculptured figure of myself I made. Besides, I made my lineage. And it was inscribed and read off before me. Afterwards this inscription I sent off everywhere among the provinces. The people unitedly worked upon it (Kent 1953, pp. 130, 132).

¹ Kent (1953, p. 167) has taken *-mai* in *dipīmai* as the enclitic form of the first person singular pronoun in the genitive case. Therefore, his translation here as 'the inscription' originally means 'my inscription.'

II²

þātiy Dārayavauš Āšāyāþiya: vašnā Auramazdāha ima dipimāiy taya adam akunavam; paṭišam ariyā āha; utā pavastāyā utā čarmā [utā ištā]; paṭišamāiy. ...-fa(?)m akunavam, paṭišam uvādām akunavam; utā niyapišiya utā paṭiyafrasiya paṭišiyā mām. pasāva ima dipiy adam frāstāyām viṣpadā aⁿtar dahyāva. kāra hamataĀšatā (Brandenstein and Mayrhofer 1964, pp. 87f.).

III

θātiy : Dārayavauš : xšāya[θi]ya : vašnā : Aura[ma]zdāha : ima : dipi¹ma¹i[y : tyā :] adam : akunavam : paṭišam : āriyā : āha : utā : [pa¹vastāy[ā :] utā : carmā : gar[štā : āha] : [pat]iṣamai[o]y : [nāmaθai]fām : akunavam : [pat]iṣa[m : u]vādā[tam : akunavam] : utā : [niya¹pi[š]i[y : u]tā¹ : pa¹tiya¹frašiya : pai[š]iyā : mā[m] : pasāva : ima : dipi[y : a]dam : f[rā]stāyām : [vi¹[s]pa¹dā : atar : dahyā[va]^o : kāra : hamā[ta]x[ša]tā

Declares king Dārayavauš: by Auramazdā's will these inscriptions, which I caused to be made, were otherwise, in Āryan language. Both in clay envelope tablets and in parchment they were wrapped. In front I had my name put on it, in front my pedigree I caused to be put on it. It was both written and read section by section to me. Then I dispatched these inscriptions everywhere in the provinces. The army collaborated (with my house) (Harmatta 1966, pp. 282f.).³

IV

θ-a-t-i-y : d-a-r-y-v-u-š : x-š-a-y-θ-i-y : v-š-n-a : a-u-r-m-z-d-a-h : i-m : dⁱ-i-p-i-¹c¹-i-¹ç-m :¹ t-y : a-d-m : a-k^u-u-n-v-m : p-t-i-š-m : a-r-i-y-a : u-t-a : p-v-s-t-a-y-[a] : u-t-a : c-r-m-a : g-r-[f-t-m] : [a-h¹] : [p-t]-i-š-m-[c]-i-y : [n-a-m-n-a]-f-m : a-k^u-u-n-v-m : p-[t]-i-š-[m : u]-v-a-d-a-[t-m] : [a-k^u-u-n]-v-[m] : u-t-a : n-i-y-p-i-[θ]-i-[y : u]-t-a : p-t-i-y-f-r-θ-i-y : p-i-š-i-y-a : m-a-[m] : p-s-a-[v] : i-m : dⁱ-i-p-i-¹c¹-i-¹ç¹-m : f-[r]-a-s-t-a-y-m : vⁱ-i-[s]-p-d-a : a-t-r : d-h-y-a-[v] : k-a-r : h-m-a-[t]-x-š-t-a

/θāti Dārayavauš xšāyaθiya: vašnā Auramazdāha ima dipiciṣam, taya adam akunavam, paṭišam ariyā, utā pavastāyā utā carmā gr̥ftam āha, paṭišamci nāmanāfam akunavam, paṭišam uvādātām akunavam, utā niyapinθiya utā paṭiyafraθiya paṭišiyā mām, pasāva ima dipiciṣam frāstāyām viṣpadā antar dahyāva, kāra hamataxšatā./

² Brandenstein and Mayrhofer have not translated this part of the inscription, but the keywords have been translated in *Lexikon* of their book as: *pavastā*- 'Haut, Pergament' (p. 140), *čarman*- 'Fell, Leder' (p. 112), *išti*- 'luftgetrockneter Ziegel' (p. 127), *uvādā*- 'Abkunft, Herkunft, Stammbaum' (p. 149).

³ According to Harmatta (1966, p. 258), this part of the inscription refers to the draft copy of the inscription prepared before its appearance on the rock. He believes that Darius, following the Assyro-Babylonian tradition, first ordered a copy of the inscription to be written in the Old Persian cuneiform script on a clay tablet. This tablet was put in a clay envelope on which the Babylonian and Elamite versions were then written. This trilingual text was then wrapped in a piece of leather containing the Aramaic version. After that, the inscription was read before Darius who confirmed it with his cylinder seal. Finally the text of the inscription was inscribed on the rock. In addition, other copies of the inscription were written on clay tablets in Babylonian and Elamite and on parchment in Aramaic and were sent throughout the empire.

Proclaims Darius, the king: By the favour of Auramazdā this (is) the form of writing, which I have made, besides, in Aryan. Both on clay tablets and on parchment it has been placed. Besides, I also made the signature; besides, I made the lineage. And it was written down and was read aloud before me. Afterwards I have sent this form of writing everywhere into the countries. The people strove (to use it) (Schmitt 1991, pp. 45, 73-74).⁴

As can be seen, there are a number of key words and phrases in this passage which are interpreted differently. Their reconstructions, readings and translations in some of the most important sources are listed below.

i(ya)m dipīmaiy ty(ām) ‘this is my inscription which’ (Kent 1953, pp. 130, 132; see also footnote 1 in this paper)

ima dipīmaiy taya ‘[this my inscription which]’ (Brandenstein and Mayrhofer 1964, pp. 87, 116)

ima dipīma’i[y tyā] ‘these inscriptions which’ (Harmatta 1966, pp. 282-83)

ima dipiciçam taya ‘this (is) the form of writing which’ (Schmitt 1991, p. 73)

Eilers’ proposal, in Lecoq (1974, p. 78)	<i>d̥-i-p-i-[v⁽ⁱ⁾-i-d-m]</i>
Lazard (1976, p. 182)	<i>dipi[va]i[dam]</i>
Rossi (2000, p. 2097)	<i>dipi[dānam]</i>

ariyā āha ‘it was in Aryan’ (Kent 1953, pp. 130, 132)

ariyā āha ‘[it was in Aryan]’ (Brandenstein and Mayrhofer 1964, pp. 87, 105)

āriyā āha ‘were in Āryan language’ (Harmatta 1966, pp. 282f.)

ariyā ‘in Aryan’ (Schmitt 1991, p. 73)

Before 1991, all sources, following Cameron (1951, p. 52), took for granted the existence of the verb *āha* after *ariyā*. It was Schmitt (1991, p. 45, note 89) who showed for the first time that there is a blank space equal to the size of one sign after *ariyā*. Such a blank space, which can be seen elsewhere in the same inscription, sometimes denotes the beginning of a new sentence and sometimes has been left blank due to the unevenness of the surface of the rock (see Schmitt 1991, p. 11).

⁴ This part of the inscription had been previously translated by Schmitt (1990, p. 302) as follows: Says Darius the king: By the will of Ahura Mazdā that is my script, which I made. Also, it was in Aryan, and it was placed (?) on clay tablets and parchment. Also, I made my name (?). Also, I made the lineage. And it was inscribed and was read before me. After that I sent this script everywhere into the lands. The people learned (?) (it).

pavastāyā ‘on clay tablets’ (Kent 1953, pp. 130, 132)

pavastāyā ‘on parchment’ (Brandenstein and Mayrhofer 1964, pp. 87f., 140)

^l*pa*^l*vastāy[ā]* ‘in clay envelope tablets’ (Harmatta 1966, pp. 282f.)

pavastāyā ‘on clay tablets’ (Schmitt 1991, p. 73)

Although the Persian word *pust* (from Middle Persian *pōst*) ‘skin; hide; parchment’ is eventually derived from Old Persian *pavastā-*, the latter, as correctly shown by Benveniste (1951, pp. 42-47), denoted the thin clay envelope in which unbaked clay tablets were kept. Therefore, translating *pavastāyā* as ‘on parchment’ is not acceptable. It should also be mentioned that Hinz (1972, p. 244) has incorrectly reconstructed this word as *[u]-v-s-t-a-y-[a]*.

graθitā āha ‘it was composed’ (Kent 1953, pp. 130, 132)

[utā ištā] ‘[and on air-dried brick]’ (Brandenstein and Mayrhofer 1964, pp. 88, 127)

gar[štā āha] ‘they were wrapped’ (Harmatta 1966, pp. 282f.)

gr̥tām āha ‘it has been placed’ (Schmitt 1991, p. 74)

Hinz (1972, p. 244)	<i>g-r-[f-t-m : a-h]</i>
Lecoq (1974, p. 82)	<i>[h]-r-[š-t-m : a-h]</i> ‘it was published’

patišamaiy patikaram ‘Besides, a sculptured figure of myself’ (Kent 1953, pp. 130, 132)

patišamaiy...fa(?)m ‘[Besides, my...]’ (Brandenstein and Mayrhofer 1964, pp. 88, 139)

[pat]išamai[o]y [nāmaθai]fam ‘In front, my name’ (Harmatta 1966, pp. 282f.)

patišamci nāmanāfam ‘Besides, also the signature’ (Schmitt 1991, p. 74)

Initially, Schmitt (1991, pp. 45, 74) read the first word as <i>[p-t]-i-š-m-[c]-i-y</i> / <i>patišamci</i> l.	
Mayrhofer (1964, p. 82)	<i>[u-v-a-n-a]-f-m</i> ‘genealogy’
Hinz (1972, p. 244)	<i>[n-a-m-n-a]-f-m</i>
Lecoq (1974, p. 83)	<i>[n-a-m-n-a]-f-m</i>
Gershevitch (1982, p. 104) has translated this word into ‘line,’ by which he means the lines of the inscription!	

uvādām ‘lineage’ (Kent 1953, pp. 130, 132)

uvādām [‘lineage’] (Brandenstein and Mayrhofer 1964, pp. 88, 149)

[*u*]vādā[tam] ‘pedigree’ (Harmatta 1966, pp. 282f.)

uvādātām ‘lineage’ (Schmitt 1991, p. 74)

Hinz (1972, p. 244)	[<i>u</i>]- <i>v-a-d-a</i> -[<i>t-m</i>]
Lecoq (1974, p. 83)	<i>u</i>]- <i>v-a-d-a</i> -[<i>t-m</i>
Gershevitch (1982, p. 104) translated this word into ‘column,’ by which he means the columns of the inscription!	

i(mā)m dipim adam ‘this inscription I’ (Kent 1953, pp. 130, 132)

ima dipiy adam [‘this inscription I’] (Brandenstein and Mayrhofer 1964, p. 88)

ima dipi[ya a]dam ‘these inscriptions I’ (Harmatta 1966, pp. 282f.)

ima dipiciṣam ‘this form of writing’ (Schmitt 1991, p. 74)

Hinz (1952, p. 37)	<i>d^h-i-p-i</i> -[<i>y : a</i>]- <i>d-m</i>
Lecoq (1974, p. 83)	<i>d^h-i-p-i</i> -[<i>v-i</i>]- <i>d-m</i>
Lazard (1976, p. 182)	<i>dipi</i> [<i>vai</i>] <i>dam</i>
Rossi (2000, p. 2097)	<i>dipi</i> [<i>dān</i>] <i>am</i>

kāra hamātaxšatā ‘The people unitedly worked (upon it)’ (Kent 1953, pp. 130, 132)

kāra hamataĀšatā [‘The people/The army endeavoured’] (Brandenstein and Mayrhofer 1964, pp. 88, 129, 144)

kāra hamā[ta]x[ša]tā ‘The army collaborated (with my house)’ (Harmatta 1966, pp. 282f.)

kāra hamātaxšatā ‘The people strove (to use it)’ (Schmitt 1991, p. 74)

Lecoq (1974, p. 83) ⁵	<i>k-a-r h-m-a</i> -[<i>p-i</i>]- <i>x-š-t-a</i> ‘The officials copied’
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⁵ Lecoq (1997, p. 212) later translated this part of the inscription as: Le roi Darius déclare: “Grâce à Ahuramazdā, voici le texte que j’ai traduit en arien; et sur tablette et sur cuir, il avait été traduit aussi; j’ai traduit ma généalogie; je l’ai approuvée; et cela a été écrit et lu devant moi; ensuite, j’ai envoyé ce texte partout parmi les peuples; l’armée y a collaboré.”

Lazard (1976, pp. 181, 184) ⁶	<i>k-a-r h-m-a-[p-i]-x-š-t-a</i> ‘The people... (?)’
Gershevitch (1982, p. 105)	<i>k-a-r h-m-a-[c]-x-š-t-a</i> ‘The people understood’
Rossi (2000, p. 2097)	<i>kāra hamā[t]axšatā</i>

As mentioned above, this part of the inscription has no Babylonian equivalent and the Elamite version is a later addition. The most important readings and translations of the Elamite version of this part of the inscription are given below.

I

¹da-ri-ia-ma-u-iš ¹SUNKI na-an-ri za-u-mi-in ^du-ra-maz^x-da-na ¹ú ^htup-pi-me da-a-e-ik-ki hu-ut-tá har-ri-ia-ma ap-pa šá-iš-šá in-ni šà-ri ku-ut-tá ^hha-la-at-uk-ku ku-ut-tá KUŠ^{meš}-uk-ku ku-ut-tá ^hhi-iš ku-ut-tá e-ip-pi hu-ut-tá ku-ut-tá tal-li-ik ku-ut-tá ¹ú ti-ip-pa pè-ip-ra-ka⁴ me-ni ^htup-pi-me am-mín-nu ¹da-a-ia-u-iš mar-ri-da ha-ti-ma ¹ú tin-gi-ia ¹taš-šu-íp-pè sa-pi-iš

Et Darius, le roi, déclare: “Par le fait d’Uramazda, j’ai fait autrement/un autre texte en aryen, ce qu’il n’y avait pas auparavant, sur argile et sur peau, et j’ai fait nom (et) généalogie et cela a été écrit et lu devant moi; ensuite j’ai envoyé ce texte-là dans tous les pays; les gens (l’)ont répété” (Grillot-Susini et al. 1993, pp. 38, 58f.).⁶

II

v.Dariyamauš v.SUNKI nanri zaumin d.urasmasda-na v.u h.tuppi-me dae ikki hutta har-ia.ma appa šaššainni šari kudda halat-ukku kudda KUŠ.lg-ukku kudda hiš kudda eppi hutta kudda tallik kudda v.u-tippa pepraka meni h.tuppi-me aminnu v.dahyauš marrida hatima v.u tingia v.taššup sapiš

Dice Dario re: “per volere di Ahuramazda, io ho iscritto il mio documento sulla roccia/sul *Har* (che è *šaššainni*), su mattoni crudi e su KUŠ, e ho prodotto i miei nomi e la mia titolatura; è stato redatto ed è stato emanato alla mia presenza; quindi questo stesso documento l’ho inviato in tutti i paesi. L’esercito ne è stato garante” (Rossi 2000, p. 2097).

It seems necessary to elaborate on two important points before proposing a new interpretation for this part of the inscription.

⁶ Also Grillot-Susini: ‘moi, j’ai fait la version en aryen de l’inscription et sur argile et sur peau... et la titulature que j’ai faite et qui a été écrite et relue devant moi, alors ce texte je l’ai envoyé...’; Malbran-Labat: ‘J’ai fait sur un autre (matériau) le texte, en aryen, (celui) qui est au-dessus, (à savoir) sur argile et sur peau...’ (Grillot-Susini et al. 1993, p. 59, fn. 162; for Herrenschmidt’s previous translation, see Herrenschmidt 1989, pp. 193-208).

1. In this part of the inscription, Darius points to the addition of an 'Aryan' version to the two previous versions (i.e., the Elamite and Babylonian). On the other hand, Darius announces that besides adding the 'Aryan' version, the text of the inscription was written on clay tablets and on parchment and circulated to all the provinces of his empire.⁷ By 'Aryan' Darius must have meant his mother tongue, Old Persian. The use of the word 'Aryan' to refer to an 'Iranian language' is also attested in the Bactrian inscription written in Greek script discovered in 1993 at the site of Rabatak near Surkh Kotal in Afghanistan. The subject of this important 23-line inscription is the description of the events of the first regnal year of the Kushan emperor Kanishka, including the foundation of a temple. Lines 3-4 read:

οτιη ι ιωναγγο οασο οζοαστο ταδηια αριαιο ωσταδο 'and he (Kanishka) issued (?) a Greek edict (?), then he put it into Aryan (i.e. Bactrian)' (cf. Kluyver 2001, pp. 17f.; Sims-Williams 1998, p. 81; 2004, p. 2).

Therefore, taking 'Aryan' in the Bisotun inscription as referring to the Old Persian cuneiform script, and thus concluding that the Old Persian script did not exist before the Bisotun inscription (e.g. Schmitt 1990, pp. 300, 302; 1991, p. 19; 2004, p. 721; Shahbazi 1996, p. 48; Walker 2004, p. 46), has no firm basis. On the other hand, Schmitt's translation of *pasāva ima dipiciṣam frāstāyam vispadā antar dahyāva, kāra hamātaxšatā* as 'Afterwards I have sent this form of writing everywhere into the countries. The people strove (to use it)' (1991, pp. 73f.), in which *ima dipiciṣam* 'this form of writing' is taken to refer to the Old Persian cuneiform script, is contradicted by himself elsewhere (1993, p. 458), where he states that the use of the Old Persian script was limited to the central lands of the empire (i.e. Persis, Elam and Media) and it was not intended for use in everyday life. In addition, the discovery of the fragmentary Babylonian and Aramaic versions of the Bisotun inscription at Babylon, Elephantine and Saqqara shows that Darius intended to make the contents of the inscription known to the speakers of other languages throughout his empire, not simply to send them 'this form of writing,' i.e. the Old Persian script.

Rossi (2000, p. 2097) is the only scholar who does not translate the Old Persian word *ariyā* and its Elamite equivalent *har-ri-ia-ma* in this part of the inscription into 'Aryan.' According to him (2000, p. 2093), the word *ariyā* in

⁷ Chul-Hyun (2003, pp. 21f.) believes that the Old Persian version of the inscription was copied on parchment in Aramaic script and then sent to the provinces of the Persian empire. This opinion can hardly be proved.

this part of the inscription is related to the Persian words *xār*, *xārā*, *xāre* 'granite' (also in *xārāsang*, *sang-e xārā*); thus he translates it into 'roccia' (i.e. rock). It must be mentioned that the word *ariya-* means 'Aryan' in all its usage in Old Persian inscriptions, whether in isolation or in combination with the word *ciça-* 'seed, lineage' (Kent 1953, pp. 170, 184). At the same time, we know that Darius took much pride in his Aryan lineage: in his tomb inscription at Naqsh-e Rostam (DNa), he calls himself as *ariya ariyaciça* 'Aryan, of Aryan lineage' (Schmitt 2000, p. 29). Adding an 'Aryan' (i.e. Old Persian) version to the Elamite and Babylonian versions of the Bisotun inscription, in spite of the limited use of Old Persian in his vast empire, shows his emotional attachment to his lineage and his mother tongue.

2. After the addition of the Old Persian version to the Elamite and Babylonian versions of the inscription, Darius issued an order to copy the text of the inscription on clay tablets and on parchment and circulate it to all provinces of his empire. At this stage, two items were added to the copies of the inscription; they have been identified as 'sculptured figure/lineage' (Kent 1953), '?/lineage' (Brandenstein and Mayrhofer 1964), 'name/genealogy' (Lazard 1976; Grilhot-Susini et al., 1993), 'signature/lineage' (Schmitt 1991), 'genealogy/approval' (Lecoq 1997), 'name/title' (Rossi 2000), and even 'line/column' (Gershevitch 1982). It must be mentioned that the Elamite equivalent of the first word is *^hhi-iš* which is a well-attested word meaning 'name; fame' in Middle Elamite, Neo-Elamite and Achaemenid Elamite (see Hinz and Koch 1987, I, pp. 662).

The Aramaic version of the inscription provides a hint for the solution of this problem. The lines 66-69 of the Aramaic version found at Elephantine are in fact the equivalents of the final lines (lines 50-60) of Darius's second tomb inscription at Naqsh-e Rostam (DNb). The existence of two Old Persian loanwords in this part of the Aramaic version shows that it was not translated from Babylonian. These two words are: *prtr* (line 67), from Old Persian *paratar* 'besides,' and *ymnš* (line 69), from Old Persian *ayāumajniš* 'without fervor (in counter-attack)' (see Sims-Williams 1981, pp. 1-7; Schmitt 2000, pp. 39, 41). This fragmentary part of the Aramaic version and its Old Persian equivalent in DNb are given below.

Aramaic Version

66. [šgy'] hwd' 'yk zy 'byd 'nt w'yk hlttk
 67. [zy b']dnk y'mr šm' zy prtr y'mr
 68. [y]'bd zy mskn y'bd zk ḥzy 'p qdmtk
 69. [w'l b]ṭwbk ymnš thwh [.]rklyk 'l yl[]n

66. [... Very much] make known how you act and of what kind your conduct is.
 67. [... which one] may say in your ear. Hear what one may say besides.⁸
 68. [... May] do; observe also that which a poor man may do.
 69. [... nor in] your well-being be without fervor (in counter-attack)⁹... (see also Greenfield and Porten 1982, pp. 46, 48).

Old Persian Version

50-55 /marikā, dīšam azdā kušuvā, ciyākaram ahi, ciyākaramtaī ūnarā, ciyākaramtaī parīyanam; mātaī ava vahištam θadaya, tayataī gauššāyā θanhyaīti; avašci āxšnudi, taya paratar θanhyaīti./

55-60 /marikā, mātaī ava naišbam θdaya, taya... kunavāti; taya skaṇθiś kunavāti, avašci didi; marikā, ... mā patiyātaya..., māpati šiyātiyā ayāumaīniš bavāhi... mā raxθa(n)tu.../

50-55 O young man, very much make known of what kind you are, of what kind (are) your skills, of what kind (is) your conduct! Let not that seem the best to you which is spoken in your ears; listen also to that which is said besides.

55-60 O young man, let not that seem good to you, which the... does; what the weak one does—observe that too! O young man, do not set yourself against the..., moreover do not become (a man) without fervor in counter-attack owing to your blissful happiness! Let not...! (Schmitt 2000, pp. 39, 41).

So far it has not been clear why, how or when this part of the DNb inscription came to be incorporated into the Aramaic version of the Bisotun inscription (see e.g. Greenfield and Porten 1982, p. 47; Schmitt 1990, p. 303). In my opinion, however, this new paragraph in the Aramaic version is in fact part of the two items added to the text of the Bisotun inscription by the command of Darius when it was copied on clay tablets and on parchment to be circulated throughout the empire.

A cursory glance at Darius's tomb inscriptions (DNa and DNb) reveals Darius's emphasis on his genealogy, on the one hand, and on his virtues, skills and abilities, on the other. In DNa (lines 8-15), Darius introduces himself as:

/adam Dārayavauš, xšāyaθiya vazrka, xšāyaθiya xšāyaθiyānām, xšāyaθiya dahyūnām vispazanānām, xšāyaθiya ahyāyā būmiyā vazrkāyā dūraī api, Vištāspahyā puça, Haxāmanišiya, Pārsa, Pārsahyā puça, Ariya, Ariyaciça./

I (am) Darius, the great king, king of kings, king of the countries containing all races, king on this great earth even far off, the son of Hystaspes, an Achaemenid, a Persian, the son of a Persian, an Aryan, of Aryan lineage (Schmitt 2000, pp. 29f.).

⁸ In Greenfield and Porten (1982, p. 48): 'openly.'

⁹ In Greenfield and Porten (1982, p. 48): 'insecure.'

In DNb, Darius says:

1-5 /baga vazpka Auramazdā, haya adadā ima frašam, taya vajñatai, haya adadā šiyātim martiyahyā, haya xraθum utā aruvastam upari Dārayavaum xšāyaθiyam niyasaya./

5-11 /θāti Dārayavaus xšāyaθiya: vašnā Auramazdāhā avākaram ami, taya rāstam dauštā ami, miθa nai dauštā ami; najmā kāma, taya skaθθiš tunuvantahyā rādi miθa kariyaiš, najmā ava kāma, taya tunuvā skaθθaiš rādi miθa kariyaiš./

11-15 /taya rāstam, ava mām kāma; martiyam draujanam nai dauštā ami; nai manauviš ami; yacimai pṛtanayā bavati, dṛšam dārayāmi manahā; uvaipašiyahyā dṛšam xšayamna ami./

16-21 /martiya haya hantaxšatai, anudim hankṛtahyā avaθādim paribarāmi, haya vināθayati, anudim vinastahyā avaθā pṛsāmi; najmā kāma, taya martiya vināθayaiš, najpatimā ava kāma, yadi vināθayaiš, nai fraθiyaiš./

21-24 /martiya taya pari martiyam θāti, ava mām nai vṛnavatai, yātā ubānām handugām āxšnavai./

24-27 /martiya taya kunaṭti yadivā ābarati anu taṃmanišai, avanā xšnuta bavāmi utā mām vasai kāma, utā uθanduš ami utā vasai dadāmi agriyānām martiyānām./

27-32 /avākaramcimai uši utā framānā, yaθāmai taya kṛtam vajñāhi yadivā āxšnavāhai utā viθiyā utā spāya(n)tiyāyā, aitamai aruvastam upari manašcā ušicā./

32-40 /imapatimai aruvastam tayamai tanuš tāvayati, hamaranakara ami ušhamaranakara; hakarammai ušiyā gāθavā hištanti, yaci vajñāmi hamīčiyam, yaci nai vajñāmi; utā ušibiyā utā framānāyā adakai fratarā maniyai afuvāyā, yadi vajñāmi hamīčiyam yaθā yadi nai vajñāmi./

40-45 /yāūmañniš ami utā dastaibiyā utā pādaiibiyā, asabāra uvasabāra ami, θanuvaniya uθanuvaniya ami utā pastiš utā asabāra, ṛštika ami uvṛštika utā pastiš utā asabāra./

45-49 /imā ūnarā, tayā Auramazdā upari mām niyasaya, utādiš atāvayam bartanai, vašnā Auramazdāhā tayamai kṛtam, imaiḃiš ūnaraiḃiš akunavam, tayā mām Auramazdā upari niyasaya./

50-55 /marikā, dṛšam azdā kušuvā, ciyākaram ahi, ciyākaramtai ūnarā, ciyākaramtai pariyanam; mātai ava vahištam θadaya, tayatai gaušāyā θanhyāti; avašci āxšnudi, taya paratar θanhyāti./

55-60 /marikā, mātai ava naiḃam θdaya, taya... kunavāti; taya skaθθiš kunavāti, avašci dīdi; marikā, ... mā patiyātaya ..., māpati šiyātiyā ayāūmañniš bavāhi ... mā raxθa(n)tu.../

1-5 A great god (is) Auramazdā, who created this marvellous (creation) that is seen, who created happiness for man, who bestowed wisdom and ability upon Darius, the king.

5-11 Proclaims Darius, the king: By the favour of Auramazdā I am of such a kind that I am friendly to right, (but) I am not friendly to wrong. (It is) not my desire that the weak one might be treated wrongly for the strong one's sake, (and) that (is) not my desire that the strong one might be treated wrongly for the weak one's sake.

11-15 What (is) right, that (is) my desire. To the man following Falsehood I am not friendly. I am not hot-tempered. Whatever occurs to me in a quarrel, I firmly hold back in my thinking; I am firmly in control of myself.

16-21 The man who cooperates, for him, according to the cooperation, thus I care for him; who does harm, according to the harm done, thus I punish him. (It is) not my desire that a man should do harm; moreover that (is) not my desire: If he should do harm, he should not be punished.

21-24 What a man says about a(nother) man, that does not convince me, until I have heard the statement of both.

24-27 What a man achieves or brings according to his powers, by that I become satisfied, and it is very much my desire; and I am pleased and give generously to loyal men.

27-32 Of such a kind (are) my intelligence and (my) command; when you shall see or hear what has been done by me, both at court and in battle, that (is) my ability in addition to thinking and intelligence.

32-40 Moreover this (is) my ability, that my body is strong (and that) as a battle-fighter I am a good battle-fighter. At once my intelligence stands in its (proper) place, whether I see a rebel (before me) or not. Both by intelligence and by command at that time I regard myself as superior to panic, when I see a rebel (before me) just as when I do not see (one).

40-45 I am fervent in counter-attack with both hands as well as with both feet; as a horseman I am a good horseman; as a bowman I am a good bowman, both on foot and on horseback; as a spearman I am a good spearman, both on foot and on horseback.

45-49 These (are) the skills which Auramazdā bestowed upon me, and I was strong (enough) to bear them. By the favour of Auramazdā, what has been done by me, I have done with these skills which Auramazdā has bestowed upon me.

50-55 O young man, very much make known of what kind you are, of what kind (are) your skills, of what kind (is) your conduct! Let not that seem the best to you which is spoken in your ears; listen also to that which is said besides.

55-60 O young man, let not that seem good to you, which the... does; what the weak one does—observe that too! O young man, do not set yourself against the..., moreover do not become (a man) without fervor in counter-attack owing to your blissful happiness! Let not...! (Schmitt 2000, pp. 38-41).

As shown above, Darius gives his lineage in DNa and enumerates his virtues, skills and abilities in DNb. In other words, these two inscriptions make known Darius's lineage and personality, i.e. the two writings which were added to the copies of the Bisotun inscription, to be circulated throughout the Achaemenid empire. Therefore, I propose the following reading and translation for the last paragraph (lines 88-92) of Col. IV of the Old Persian version of the Bisotun inscription.

/θāti Dārayavauš xšāyaθiya: vašnā Auramazdāha ima dipiciṣam, taya adam akunavam, paṭiṣam ariyā, utā pavastāyā utā carmā gr̥tam āha, paṭiṣamci nāmanāfam akunavam, paṭiṣam uvādām akunavam, utā niyapinθiya utā patiyafraθiya paṭiṣiyā mām, pasāva ima dipiciṣam frāstāyam vispadā antar dahyāva, kāra hamātaxšatā./

Proclaims Darius, the king: By the favor of Auramazdā this text which I made, besides (being) in Aryan, both on clay tablets and on parchment it was placed.

Besides, I also made (my) lineage; besides, I made (a manifesto of my) personality. And it was written down and was read aloud before me. Afterwards I sent this text everywhere into the countries. The army strove (to circulate it).

Concluding remarks:

1. *nāmanāfa*- 'name and family; genealogy, pedigree.' The Old Persian word **nāfa*- 'family' has already been reconstructed on the basis of a few proper names preserved in Elamite texts (e.g. **Hunāfa*-, originally meaning 'having a good family/origin'; see Hinz 1975, p. 125; Hinz and Koch 1987, II, p. 1235). The cognates of this word in Old and Middle Iranian languages are Avestan *nāfa*- 'navel; family' (Bartholomae 1904, p. 1062); Inscriptional Parthian *nāf*- 'family' (Gignoux 1972, p. 59); Zoroastrian Middle Persian *nāf*- 'family,' *nāfag*- 'navel' (MacKenzie 1971, p. 57); Manichaean Parthian *nāfag*- 'centre, middle' (Boyce 1977, p. 60); Manichaean Middle Persian *nāf*- 'family,' *nāfag*- 'centre, middle' (Boyce 1977, p. 60); cf. Sanskrit *nābhi*- 'navel; a near relation or friend' (Monier-Williams 1899, p. 535). Grammatically, Old Persian *nāmanāfa*- is a *dvandva* or copulative compound, that is a combination of two simple words which could be connected in sense by the conjunction 'and'; hence: *nāmanāfa*- 'name and family,' then also 'genealogy, pedigree.' *nāmanāfa*- should be considered as the first attested *dvandva* compound in the extant Old Persian inscriptions (for other types of compounds in Old Persian, see Kent 1953, pp. 53f.).

2. *uvādā*- 'one's own nature, personality.' This word is the equivalent of Sanskrit *svadhā*- 'one's own nature' (Monier-Williams 1899, p. 1278). *uvādā*- is a *tatpuruṣa* or dependent compound, in which the first component (*uva*- 'self; own') is the dependent and the second component (*dā*- 'position; nature,' from ²*dā*- 'to put, place; to make, create') is the nucleus. The change of *uva*- into *uvā*- (in *uvādā*-) is the result of the phenomenon known as *vṛddhi* or vowel lengthening, which was common in making nominal compounds (see Kent 1953, p. 44).

3. The words *nāmanāfa*- and *uvādā*- have been translated into Elamite as ^b*hi-iš* and *e-ip-pi*, respectively. As said before, ^b*hi-iš* is the common Elamite word for 'name; fame,' attested several times in Middle Elamite, Neo-Elamite and Achaemenid Elamite (see Hinz and Koch 1987, I, p. 662). However, for *e-ip-pi* (Middle Elamite *a-ap-pi*, Neo-Elamite *a-b-pi*), the conjectural meanings 'descent; genealogy; origin' (Hinz and Koch 1987, I, pp. 16, 35, 392) do not seem appropriate; rather '(a manifesto of one's) personality' makes sense in

all the attestations of the word. In addition, the sequence *hi-iš a-ap-pi* (also *hi-i-iš a-ap-pi*) is attested in Middle Elamite in the inscriptions of Šilhak-Inšušinak (r. ca. 1150-1120 BCE) and Huteluduš-Inšušinak (r. ca. 1120-1110) (Hinz and Koch 1987, I, pp. 16, 660; II, pp. 1322, 1327); therefore, it can be deduced that recording one's lineage and one's personality was also a common practice among Elamite kings.

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